

THE PLAYERS Championship

Wednesday, March 9, 2022

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Dustin Johnson

Press Conference

HALEY PETERSON: We would like to welcome Dustin Johnson to the media center here at THE PLAYERS Championship. Dustin, welcome back. You'll be making your 13th appearance here.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Well, thank you. It's always good to be here. Obviously it's a great event, and this year is probably the best condition I've ever seen the course. Hopefully the weather holds up for us.

HALEY PETERSON: You had about two weeks off since Genesis. So how is your game feeling entering this week?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It's feeling good. I had a lot of good work last week. I've had some good work this week. So felt like the game -- the game has been pretty good this year, just haven't -- struggled with the putting a little bit, but put in a lot of work last week, this week, and feel like I'm rolling it a lot better.

Q. You talked about the 13th year here. Three of the last four years you've been in the top 20 here. How do you feel the change from May to March has suited your game here, and do you feel like you've adapted better to the course since it has moved to March?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, I like the change. I feel like the course is in better condition, obviously, with the overseed. But plays a little bit longer. Obviously in May it's really warm. The course plays really fast.

I feel like this time of year the course definitely suits my game a little bit better.

Q. If you could keep this as simple as possible, why have you gone a year without winning, do you think?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: That's not a very simple answer, but just haven't played well.

Q. What would be the complicated answer?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I don't know if we have enough time.



Q. Has there been any injury, for example?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No, nothing like that. Well, last year I felt like I was doing a lot of driver testing, and then so kind of took away a little bit from what I needed to be working on. Never really could -- was testing all year really. I must have tested 100 drivers probably.

So then obviously testing drivers all year then kind of leaks into the iron game, and it just felt like I never could really match it up where if I was driving it well, I wasn't hitting my irons very good, if I was hitting my irons really well, I wasn't driving it good. So it was just kind of a frustrating year.

Q. Tiger is obviously being inducted into Hall of Fame tonight. I'm curious what kind of influence he had on you when you watched him and when you first remembered watching him when you were younger.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, Tiger, I think he obviously was huge for the game of golf and deserves to be in the Hall of Fame.

For me growing up as a kid, even when I was in high school, golf was still kind of not really considered a cool sport to play or wasn't really -- maybe not that many people played it, and especially in high school you kind of were a dork if you played golf.

But Tiger made it actually a cool sport to play. For me it was huge. Obviously at that time it was when he was in his prime, so watching him, everybody wanted to be like Tiger for sure.

So he was a huge part of me playing golf and wanting to get out on TOUR and play against him.

Q. Have you ever tried to put a finger on why you haven't had more success here? It's one of the rare places that you haven't. You have one top 10 in your career here and you seemingly are built for this golf course.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Honestly I don't know because I like the golf course and I feel like it sets up well for me. But yeah, I would say if anything, that's held me back, it's



probably just putting around here. But I feel like moving to March, I feel like I can read the greens a little bit better.

The last few days I feel like I'm rolling the ball really well on the greens, but I would say that would probably be the number one thing. Just playing in May, I don't know why I always struggled on the green.

But I do like the golf course, and I feel like it sets up really well for me. I feel really comfortable out here, and I've had a little more success the last few years since we moved it and hopefully can continue that.

Q. You were talking about your putting struggles. Can you talk about what you're doing to try to improve that? I know you recently visited with the Putt Doctor. Is he helping you at all, and what are you working on?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, I've definitely worked with Dr. Farnsworth a few times. But yeah, more just repetition, just practicing a lot more, just trying to get the ball started on the right line because I feel like I read the greens really well, I've got really good feel on the greens, just it's all about starting it where you're looking. Just really been focusing hard on that.

Q. I don't think we've had an opportunity to talk to you since your statement came out Sunday of Riv week. I'm curious in hindsight how much was all that circling a distraction to you?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I mean, any time you have something that's not what you're doing it's going to distract you. But for me I don't think it was too much of a distraction. Maybe it was, I don't know. I can't really answer that. Yeah, I mean, I'm happy playing golf right where I'm at.

Q. Can you indicate your level of interest in it before you made your statement, and what prompted you to kind of declare what you're doing when you did?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Well, a little bit to do with what he was saying is I haven't been playing that well, don't know if it was -- if it had anything to do with that. But just wanted to have my complete focus on golf and playing on the PGA TOUR. That was the main reason for the statement.

Yeah, I mean, obviously it was something that you had to have a little bit of interest in, in my position, but like I said, talking with my family and my friends and my team, I think we made the best decision for me.

Q. Did you have any conversations at all with either any of your sponsors and/or Augusta National, for

example?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I had a few conversations.

Q. Is that as far as we're going?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah. (Chuckling.)

Q. Did Austin hit the green on 17 today?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: He did not. It touched land and then it went in the water. It was improvement. At least it was going in the right direction.

HALEY PETERSON: Thank you, Dustin, for joining, and we wish you the best of luck this week.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports